

BROADCAST AWAYS

By Dylan Dawson for Sevan Ascencio

Characters:

Chuck Starling: lead anchor, played by Sevan

Jim Flintoff: co-anchor, played by Dylan

Island Monster: eight feet tall and scary, played by John?

Announcer: pre-recorded or offstage.

SCENE ONE

TIME: Evening

PLACE: A very *very* remote news studio.

AT RISE: "Action News" music plays.

ANNOUNCER (*recorded*)

From somewhere in the Pacific Ocean: *This. Is Desert Island Action News!*

ONSCREEN: Cheesy "Desert Island Action News" graphic.

ANNOUNCER (*recorded*)

With Chuck Starling.

ONSCREEN: Still of Chuck Starling looking Action News-y next to a graphic of his name.

ANNOUNCER (*recorded*)

And Jim Flintoff.

ONSCREEN: Still of Jim Flintoff, also looking Action News-y next to a graphic of his name.

Lights up on CHUCK and JIM sitting at a News Desk, on which "Desert Island Action News" is crudely scrawled. They wear filthy suits and ties, and look somewhat worse for wear – although you'd never know it from their professional demeanor.

JIM

Good evening. I'm Jim Flintoff.

CHUCK

And I'm Chuck Starling. Here are tonight's top stories.

Chuck turns to "Camera Three." Jim holds up a hand drawn "graphic" over Chuck's shoulder that says "TOP STORY."

CHUCK

It's been eighteen months, two weeks, and thirteen hours with *still* no sign of rescue.

Jim holds up a new card over Chuck's shoulder - on which are a seemingly endless amount of lines with slashes through them, marking the days.

CHUCK

And while some of us remain hopeful about getting off this island...

Jim switches to a picture of Chuck, looking happy and optimistic.

CHUCK

Others have given in to despair and are generally acting like big fat babies.

Jim holds up a new card: a picture of him dressed up like a big fat baby. Jim looks at the picture he's holding.

JIM

Hey!

CHUCK

And now Jim with the weather.

JIM

(still looking at the picture)

This seems editorial.

CHUCK

How about that weather, Jim!

JIM

Oh, right.

Jim runs from the desk over to the "Weather Station" where a picture of the island hangs on the wall.

JIM

Well Chuck, while some rain would be nice – you might even say *necessary to live* - it looks like nothing but sun, sun, and more sun on the horizon.

Jim throws up a bunch of Suns on the Island map, all smiling and wearing sunglasses.

CHUCK

Aw, look at the little faces on those guys.

JIM

Yes, Chuck. It's almost as if the sun is mocking us with its unrelenting heat, saying things like "Give up!" and "All is lost!"

Jim throws up some talking bubble decals next to the suns that say "GIVE UP!" and "ALL IS LOST!"

CHUCK

A-hal-lright Jim, good stuff. (*back to "Camera One"*) And now we turn to Spalding with the week in sports. Spalding?

Light on Spalding, a basketball attached to a stick with a tie on it. As Spalding's sports segment music plays quietly, Jim returns to the desk and Chuck briefly drops the act.

CHUCK

Hey Jim? Talk to you for a sec?

JIM

What's up, Chuck?

CHUCK

You know, when I promoted you to co-anchor, you seemed pretty excited about the job.

JIM

Well that was because I thought it would be a good way to pass the time until someone saved us. Now it just seems...insane?

CHUCK

Sitting behind a news desk is a sacred privilege, Jim. A lot of people would kill to be able to do what you're doing right now.

JIM

Well they can trade places with me any time, Chuck. ANY TIME. Also this isn't a desk, it's a rock. And you're not a news anchor. You're just some camera salesman I happened to crash land with in a plane full of television equipment.

CHUCK

You know what they say: When life gives you lemons, make *headlines!* Okay we're back in five.

JIM

My god. *You're insane.*

Lights up on Spalding as sports segment music ends.

CHUCK

(to Spalding, with a chuckle) Great stuff, Spalding. Boy those coconut bowling finals are really heating up, huh?! A-hal-right, coming up! Jim's files his report on that *(makes gir quotes)* "monster" he saw on the other side of the island.

JIM

I really did see it.

CHUCK

All that and more right after this commercial.

JIM

There really is a monster, Chuck. Why won't you believe-?

CHUCK

Commercial time, let's go!

Jingle music starts. Chuck and Jim run to another part of the stage, each revealing a FLARE GUN.

CHUCK

(singing)

WHEN YOU SEE A PLANE UP THERE!

JIM

(singing)

JUST SHOOT THESE IN THE AIR!

CHUCK

SO THE PEOPLE IN THE PLANE WILL GO

JIM

"HEY THERE'S SOMEONE THERE!"

CHUCK/JIM

DON'T GIVE UP AND CRY! TRY A FLARE!

On "FLARE," Chuck fires his into the sky, smiles to the camera.

CHUCK

Now in purple!

JIM

What are you DOING!?!? We NEED those!!!

CHUCK

Well no one's going to buy one unless they know it works.

JIM

Ohmy- It's like you don't WANT to get off this island!

CHUCK

Well maybe I *don't*, okay?! Maybe I always wanted to be a news anchor, but was too scared to get in front of the camera, so now I just sell the cameras instead. And maybe crashing here on this island is the best thing that ever happened to me. Because maybe - just maybe - it finally gave me the courage to be what I always wanted to be but was too scared to try.

JIM

Wow. You know what, Chuck? *You're* the big fat baby.

Jim starts taking off his body mic (that's been hidden on his person until now).

JIM

I'm outta here.

Jim starts to go.

CHUCK

Wait, you can't *leave*! It's almost time for Jim's Journal! People love that segment!

JIM

(spins back on him) News flash, Chuck! THERE ARE. NO. PEOPLE. These cameras aren't filming. This microphone isn't recording. It's just YOU and ME. And right now that's one too many.

Jim tosses his body mic on the ground.

CHUCK

But...where are you gonna go?

JIM

To the other side of the island. I'm gonna build a raft and take my chances in the Pacific. You might like living your dream, but me? I like *living*.

CHUCK

But...the monster.

JIM

The only monster I see is right in front of me.

CHUCK

Spalding??? But he's just a...oh.

JIM
Goodbye, Starling. And good luck.

Jim exits. Lights out.

SCENE TWO

ANNOUNCER (*recorded*)
From somewhere in the Pacific Ocean: *This. Is Desert Island Action News!*

ONSCREEN: *Cheesy "Desert Island Action News" graphic.*

ANNOUNCER (*recorded*)
With Chuck Starling.

ONSCREEN: *Chuck Starling graphic from before.*

ANNOUNCER (*recorded*)
And his *new* co-anchor: Spalding!

ONSCREEN: *Still of Spalding on a stick next to a graphic of his name.*

Lights up on Chuck and Spalding at the desk.

CHUCK
Good evening. I'm Chuck Starling. (*does a voice out the side of his mouth*) And I'm Spalding. (*back to his voice*) And here are tonight's top stories.

Chuck holds up the "Top Stories" graphic card next to his own head, except it's upside down.

CHUCK
Whoops, um...

Chuck flips the card right side up then tosses it aside. He holds up a new card, this one of more lines with slashes through them.

CHUCK
It's been thirteen days, six hours, and twenty-six minutes...and still no sign of Jim. If I had to guess, he's probably out there on that raft of his, sailing safely towards rescue.

SCENE SHIFT: *Lights up on Jim, trapped in a cage as the SILHOUETTE OF A MONSTER appears behind him, growling.*

JIM

No....please island monster....NOOOOOOOOOOOO!!!!

The monster roars.

SCENE SHIFTS BACK TO Chuck at the desk.

CHUCK

Great stuff, Spalding. Basketballs *are* better than volleyballs. (*to camera one*) And that was another installment of our newest segment: Spalding's Journal!

Chuck holds up a card that says "Jim's Journal" – except Jim has been crossed out and replaced with Spalding.

CHUCK

In entertainment news, I recently had a hallucination where I – whoops!

Chuck has knocked Spalding off its stick with the graphic card.

CHUCK

Heh heh! Umm, how about we cut to commercial while Spalding gets back on the ball! Get it?! Back on the ball! Because he's...just...(sighs)...a ball.

Chuck moves to his commercial station as jingle music starts.

CHUCK

(singing)

WHEN YOU JUST CAN'T COMPREHEND
WHY YOUR ONE AND ONLY FRIEND
HAS GONE AND LEFT YOU TO DESCEND
INTO DESPAAAAIR

Try a flare.

AND WHEN YOU JUST CAN'T FIGURE OUT
WHAT THE HECK LIFE'S ALL ABOUT
BECAUSE YOUR STUPID DREAM TURNED OUT
TO BE DEAD AIIIIIR
TRY A FLAAARE!

Lights up on Jim, still in the cage, monster behind him. They sing simultaneously and epically now.

JIM

OH GODDDDD
AM I FEELING BLUEE

CHUCK

THEY COME IN REDDDD
THEY COME IN BLUUUE

WHY WAS I SO MEAAAAN
SO MEAN, CHUCK, TO YOUUU

THEY COME IN GREEEEN
AND NOW PURPLE TOOOO

OH IIIIIIII
I MADE A HUGE MISTAKE
NOW I'M BEING BAKED
INTO MONSTER STEWW

BUT IIIIIIII
I'D TRADE EVERY FLARE THERE
IF I COULD STILL SHARE
THAT NEWS DESK WITH YOUUU

CHUCK
WHEN YOU FINALLY REALIZE

JIM
THAT YOU'RE FACING YOUR DEMISE

CHUCK
AND IT PROBABLY WASN'T WISE

JIM
TO LEAVE YOUR ONLY FRIEND BEHIND

CHUCK/JIM
AND NOW YOU'RE SCARRRRED
Try a-

Lights out on Chuck, still up on Jim.

JIM
Wait a second! My flare!

Jim pulls out his flare, shoots it into the sky.

Lights out on Jim, back up on Chuck, who looks into the sky.

CHUCK
Look, Spalding! It's Jim! He's still on the island. And he wouldn't shoot that flare unless he was in trouble! Come on, we gotta help him! (*does the "Spalding" voice*) But what about that monster? (*back to his voice*) Oh don't be a big fat baby, Spalding. Let's go save our friend.

SCENE THREE

The ISLAND MONSTER is pouring seasoning on Jim, whose arms are tied behind his back.

JIM
Please! I'm allergic to basil! Also where did you get that?

MONSTER

Oh I keep a little garden near the caves.

JIM

Really?

MONSTER

Yeah you know it started out as a hobby, but now it's pretty much all I-

CHUCK

(entering) Hey ugly! Think fast!

Chuck throws Spalding at Monster's head. Monster catches Spalding with one hand, then crushes it with said hand.

MONSTER

(throws Spalding down, points at Chuck) Now YOU!

Monster charges at Chuck.

JIM

HEY!

Monster stops.

JIM

Don't you know who that is?!

MONSTER

Dinner?

JIM

Nope. That's Chuck Starling. *(looks at Chuck)* The best damn newsman I know.

MONSTER

Oh yeah? Prove it.

CHUCK

This just in...

(pulls out flare gun, points it at Monster's head)
...YOUR FACE!

Chuck shoots monster in the face with the flare gun. Monster screams and runs off.

CHUCK

Now in purple.

JIM
Chuck! You saved me!

CHUCK
(untying Jim) Anything for a co-anchor. And a friend.

JIM
Hey uhhh, there isn't still a spot at that desk by any chance, is there?

CHUCK
(looking at destroyed Spalding) It actually just opened up. But I thought you were gonna take your chances in the ocean?

JIM
Nah, I gotta feeling things are gonna start looking up around here.

A low rumble in the distance.

JIM
See?! Thunder! It's finally gonna rain!

CHUCK
(looking up) That's not rain, Jim.

The low rumble turns into the sound of a helicopter, getting closer.

CHUCK
That's good news.

Lights out.

End of play.